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Turkey: The government appears to be in for a new round of opposition attacks over the issue of relations with the US.

The Demirel government intends to brief a joint session of parliament next week on the bilateral Defense Cooperation Agreement, which was signed last July after more than two years of stubborn negotiation. Although the parliamentary session will be "secret," and the government has no intention of allowing debate during the briefing, leftist opposition elements almost certainly will exploit the issue.

The government should have little difficulty fielding questions in parliament, but it could be subjected to sharp criticism from the leftist press for alleged over-subservience to the US. Further problems could also result if the question of the legitimacy of the agreement is submitted to the courts for constitutional review.

The government hopes to forestall any such charges of illegality by means of the present briefing. It is now in a relatively strong position to handle the issue. Not only has the Demirel administration recently won re-election, but the opposition, especially the Marxist Turkish Labor Party, is in serious disarray. Moreover, the government plans to review the Cyprus dispute at the same special session, probably to divert attention from the US-Turkish defense agreement.



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UN: The Soviets have told the US that they are ready to resume bilateral talks on the UN peace-keeping study early this month.

After the 1964-65 conflict over Soviet refusal to pay assessments for the Congo and Middle East peacekeeping operations, the General Assembly established a Committee of 33 on peacekeeping. This committee had made little headway until it established an eight-member working group--including the US and the USSR--in early 1968. The working group has been negotiating model ground rules for peacekeeping operations involving observers, which were authorized by the Security Council, and has also begun to study a model for operations involving military contingents.

Major disagreements over the establishment of an observer mission and its legal and financial arrangements still exist, but bilateral talks have indicated areas in which the Soviets may be somewhat flexible.

Moscow has insisted that the Security Council has exclusive responsibility in peacekeeping matters, with the Secretary General's management role subordinate to the Security Council in every respect. During bilateral talks in August, the Soviets offered to recognize certain activities that would slightly increase the role of the Secretary General. Another Soviet objective is "political balance" in the composition of a UN peacekeeping mission. In August the USSR accepted a compromise proposed by the US that the chief of an observer group may appoint his subordinates, provided that the Security Council designate the chief.

Financing of the observers remains a contentious issue. Present arrangements are ad hoc and largely voluntary, and Moscow would leave the method of financing to be determined by the Security Council, where the veto could be invoked.

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Israel-Lebanon: Israeli officials have issued both publicly and privately stern new warnings of retaliation against Lebanon as a result of an up-surge in fedayeen activity. They are particularly incensed by the kidnaping of an Israeli civilian on 31 December. The number of incidents along this border has been increasing despite the Lebanese Government's efforts to restrain the fedayeen. Israel almost certainly looks on this "third front" as one that presents no serious threat, but that nevertheless should not be permitted to get out of hand.

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Dominican Republic: President Balaguer has probably solidified his military support by making liberal use of military promotions in the traditional year-end government shuffling. Air Force Chief of Staff Salvador Lluberes, who was rumored to be on shaky ground because his brother, the mayor of Santo Domingo, had opposed a prospective re-election bid by the President, was given the permanent rank of brigadier general. Neit Nivar Seijas, the powerful commander of the army's First Brigade [redacted]

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[redacted] was rewarded for his loyalty with the temporary rank of brigadier general. A substantial number of promotions [redacted] were handed out, which should help shore up Balaguer's support in the lower ranks as well. [redacted]

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